

# WE COME HERE TO GIVE

## I. INTRODUCTION:

### A. STRATEGY:

#### 1. CHRISTIAN IDENTITY, PURPOSE AND MISSION:

- a. **Who** we are: the body of Christ and the children of God
- b. **Why** we exist: exist to love God and to love our neighbor
- c. **What** we do: make disciples

#### 2. GSBC PURPOSE STATEMENT

**We exist to glorify God and make disciples by loving and serving people in all situations of life. “**

#### 3. WHAT WE DO TO ACCOMPLISH THE MISSION

- Worship
- Give
- Teach
- Serve
- Witness

#### 4. KEY FOUNDATIONS

- a. Worship—all we do flows from our devotion to God
- b. Giving
  1. All we do relies on good stewardship of God’s gifts
  2. What we have enables us to help those who do not have

#### 5. PAUL’S EXAMPLE

At end of 3<sup>rd</sup> missionary journey—Paul urged Ephesian elders at Miletus

*Acts 20:32-34—And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have coveted no one’s silver or gold or clothes. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my own needs and to the men who were with me. In everything I showed you that by*

*working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."*

## **B. BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF GIVING**

### **Abraham—Gen 14:18-20**

Gave tithe [through Melchizedek]—in thanks for God granting victory and delivering Lot safely home.

### **Jacob—Gen 28: 22**

Promised tithe to God at Bethel—after dream of ladder and God's promise to give him Canaan and multiply his descendants.

### **Moses—Nu 18:21-32**

Israel gave tithe to support ministry of Levites—and Levites also gave tithe too

### **Malachi—Mal 3:8-11**

Priests sacrificed defective animals; people were withholding tithe—post-exilic oracle—mid-5<sup>th</sup> century BC.

### **Jesus**

**Mt 6:2-4**—Sermon on the Mount—told how to give alms—in secret—and Father, who sees in secret, will reward you

**Acts 20:35**—Paul reminded Ephesian elders [at Miletus] that Jesus had said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

### **Paul—II Cor 8-9**

- Collected offering to relieve the church in Palestine during the famine
- Told how Macedonians had given sacrificially
- Urged Corinthians to fulfill their commitment to give.

## **II. FOUNDATIONS OF STEWARDSHIP**

### **A. BASED ON CREATION AND GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY**

1. God made it all—so He owns it all—including us!

**Psalm 24:1-2**— *The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it, for he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters.*

2. God commands us to be good stewards—to manage properly what He has given us:

**Gen 1:27-8**—*God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”*

## **B. PRODUCT OF DISCIPLESHIP**

1. The Principle

- We give **all** of ourselves to God—remember **LK 9:23**—*If anyone will come after me . . .*
- So *all* we have is *already* His.
- Whatever he requires, we owe him already

2. The pagan view

- Everything I own is mine
- God(s) *need* what I have
- I give to gods in order to receive benefits from them—*quid pro quo*

3. Possible responses to Almighty God—two examples:

**NEGATIVE EXAMPLE:** Rich young ruler—*His* response was negative

**Mk 10**—*Jesus looked at him and loved him. One thing you lack, he said. Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me. At this, the man’s face fell. He went away sad because He had great wealth.*

**POSITIVE EXAMPLE:** Paul’s commendation of the **Macedonians**

- *Their* response was positive
- *They* gave back to God because they had already having pledged their whole lives to Him

**II Cor 8: 5**—*And they did not do as we expected, but they gave **themselves** FIRST TO THE LORD and then to us in keeping with God’s will.*

3. APPLICATION: Paul’s exhortation to the Corinthians

**II Cor 8:7**—*But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.*

## C. NOT BASED ON LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Old Testament tithes and offerings *are* a guide
  - Jesus and the NT assume they are a base-line for giving
2. But giving is not a basis of salvation—nor does it define our relationship with God
3. God does not keep score
  - a. That would imply *we* own it—and that we give part back to God
    - No! God owns it *all* already!
    - We do not barter with God
    - It is not a contract as in pagan worship
  - b. It would also imply we are blessed financially by how *much* we give
    - No! We are blessed—by the act of doing God’s will
    - We are gratified—by seeing God’s will fulfilled

## III. THREE BASIC PROBLEMS

### A. SOME DO NOT GIVE—SO THEY DO ROB GOD!

**Mal 3:8-9**     *Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, 'How have we robbed You?'*

*In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation {of you!}*

*Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows. Then I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of the ground; nor will your vine in the field drop its grapes before they are ripe, says the LORD of hosts.*

*All the nations will call you blessed, for you shall be a delightful land," says the LORD of hosts.*

1. God’s **purpose** in our giving
  - Not to provide for Himself—He does not *need* our ‘stuff’
  - But to provide for His people—his children
  - This extends to blessing all people—‘all the nations’

## 2. Results of unfaithfulness

### a. They are **robbers**

- Not returning to God what is already His
- Not providing for God's people [Israel and beyond!]

### b. They are **idolatrous**—focusing on the riches they try to hoard

### c. They **lack trust**

- Not trusting in God's ability to *provide* the harvest
- Not trusting God to *protect* the harvest

## B. SOME GIVE LEGALISTICALLY

### 1. Self-righteousness giving—God calls this **sin**

*Amos 4:4-5—Go to Bethel and sin; go to Gilgal and sin yet more. Bring your sacrifices every morning, your tithes every three years. Burn leavened bread as a thank offering and brag about your freewill offering—boast about them, you Israelites, for this is what you love to do, declares the Sovereign Lord.*

### 2. Results of legalistic giving

- a. **Immoral**—losing sight of moral-personal relation with God
- b. **Arrogance**—not thankful for God's provision—but proud of our human ability to give
- c. **Spiritual pride**—competing and comparing selves with others
- d. **Works righteousness**—as a basis of salvation—and one's relationship with God
- e. **Lost sight of mission**—we should give to bless others—not to help God and benefit selves!

### 3. How God sees it

- a. God looks at the  **motive**—not just the action
- b. God wants **faithfulness**—devotion to Him

*Hos 6:6 For I desire mercy, not sacrifice—and the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings. [KJV]*

*For I delight in **loyalty** rather than sacrifice—and the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings. [NASV]*

### C. SOME GIVE IN ORDER TO GET A BLESSING

#### 1. Giving for a reward!

But Jesus says—they already have already received their full reward here and now.

***MT 6:2**—So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.*

#### 2. Misapplying scriptural promises

##### a. Old Testament

***Mal 3:10**—Bring in the whole tithe into the store-house, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this, says the Lord almighty, and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.*

1. Not for personal gain—this provided for the Levites and those who were needy
2. The result was: to bless **all** his people—not just the giver
3. The overflow was intended to extend blessings **beyond** Israel—to those who witnessed God’s blessing of Israel

***v12**—all the nations will call you blessed.*

##### b. New Testament

***II Cor 9:6**—Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.*

1. Not a promise of personal financial prosperity to the giver
2. It refers to giving for “*ministering to the saints*” (**v1**)
3. This meant two things:
  - Generosity results in great relief for those in need
  - And greatly blesses the giver—by seeing God’s will being fulfilled

3. **Two problems**—with giving in order to be blessed financially
  - a. **Obvious** problem—trying to **manipulate** God—for selfish, materialistic reasons—just like **pagan** worship
  - b. Also—it interferes with God’s ultimate purposes:
    - To provide for **others** who are in need—loving our neighbors
    - To bless the giver with the joy of doing God’s will

#### **IV. PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL GIVING**

##### **A. THREE EXAMPLES**

###### **1. The Sermon on the Mount**

*Mt 6—No one can serve two masters—either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money!*

###### **2. The Widow’s Mite**

*Mk 12—I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth, but she out of her poverty put in everything, all she had to live on!*

###### **3. The Macedonians**

*II Cor 8:1-7—And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints.*

##### **B. WHAT THESE EXAMPLES SHOW US**

###### **1. GIVING IS MOTIVATED AND ENABLED BY GOD’S GRACE**

*II Cor 8:1—we want you to know about the **grace** that God has given the Macedonian churches*

- a. The gift of His Son
  - He gave His all—His most precious possession for us
  - Giving our all—is meager in comparison

b. Only His grace enables us to give

- He is the source—He gives us everything—so we might return part of it to Him
- He gives us the grace to overcome our natural selfishness

## 2. GIVING ARISES FROM COMPELLING DESIRE TO **SHARE**

**II Cor 8:4**—*Entirely on their own, they urgently **pleaded** with us for the **privilege** of **sharing** in this service to the saints*

- The Macedonians urgently pleaded to do so
- They considered it a **privilege**

## 3. GIVING **DOES** INDICATE SOMETHING ABOUT OUR **RELATIONSHIP** WITH GOD

- a. Either we love/serve God—or we love/serve the world—and money—**Mt 6: 19-24**—**Sermon on Mount**
- b. So—the more we love money—the less we love God
- c. The more we let go of money—and love for it—the more we are able to love God

## 4. HOW DO WE MEASURE **GENUINE** GIVING?

a. Based on generosity

- **Macedonians** were poor—but they gave generously

b. It is Proportional

- According to what God **directs**—according to His will for each person
- According to what God **provides**—we cannot give more than He give us!
- According to what **we ask**—He *can* give us more to give

c. It is Sacrificial

1. It should actually cost us something!

2. Examples

- The **Macedonians**—gave beyond what Paul expected



- The **Widow's mite**—she gave her all—more than all the others!

### C. APPLICATION—HOW TO GIVE BIBLICALLY

1. **To help others**—not to serve ourselves—this is our **purpose**
2. **Bountifully**—sow generously—not holding anything back
3. **Cheerfully**—not grudgingly or under compulsion

*II Cor 9:7—God loves a cheerful (hilarious) giver*

4. **Without ulterior motives**

*Rom 12:8—he that gives, let him do it with simplicity*

- Simplicity = straightforwardly, without other motives
- Simplicity = (also) generously, liberally

5. **Regularly and immediately**

*I Cor 16:2—On the first day of every week—when you get paid!*

[Not at the end of the year—just for tax purposes!]

6. **Personally**

- *I Cor 16:2—Each* one of you should set aside . . .
- *II Cor 9:7—Each* person should give . . .

7. **Proportionally**—as God directs

- *I Cor 16:2—Each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income*
- *II Cor 9:7—Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give,*

### V. REMINDER OF GOD'S SUFFICIENCY

**WARNING!!!** Tendency for churches to look outside for help!!!

#### 1. GOD MADE EVERY PROVISION FOR ISRAEL

- Every miracle necessary to **deliver** them from Egypt
- Every miracle necessary to **sustain** them in the wilderness
- **He anticipated** the means to build his splendid Tabernacle

**Ex 3 and 11**—provided gold , silver, cloth from Egyptians!

## 2. KEY TO ISRAEL'S SUCCESS

- a. Stirred to obedience

**Ex 35:21,22**—*And they came, every on whose **heart stirred** him up, and every one whom his **spirit made willing**, and they brought the Lord's offering to the work of the tabernacle. . . . And they came, both men and women, as many as were **willing hearted**.*

- b. Gave as God directed—sacrificially—and joyfully

**RESULT: Ex 36:4-7**—*So all the skilled craftsmen who were doing all the work on the sanctuary left their work and said to Moses, "The people are bringing more than enough for doing the work the Lord commanded to be done." Then Moses gave an order and they sent this word throughout the camp. "No man or woman is to make anything else as an offering for the sanctuary." **And so the people were restrained from bringing more, because what they already had was more than enough to do all the work.***

## 3. GOD STILL SUPPLIES OUR EVERY NEED—FROM **WITHIN**

**Eph 3:20-21**—*Now to him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we ask or imagine, according to **his power that is at work within us**, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout **all generations**, for ever and ever!*